

Message Text

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14

ACTION ARA-10

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TAGS: PINT PINS MPOL ECIN ECAP IH

SUBJ: THE WEEK IN COLOMBIA

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: THE GOC TOOK MEASURES TO STEM THE INFLATIONARY PRESSURES CAUSED BY SOARING COFFEE PRICES. THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND THE GOVERNMENT AIRED OPPOSING VIEWS OF ANDEAN PACT DECISION 100. THE PROPOSAL TO EXPAND MILITARY EDUCATION FACILITIES GENERATED CONTROVERSY IN ACADEMIC QUARTERS AND IN THE PRESS. GUERRILLAS, INCLUDING THE LONG DORMANT "NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY" FOUGHT WITH POLICE AND ARMY FORCES IN TWO RURAL LOCATIONS. END SUMMARY.

2. GOC ADOPTS ADDITIONAL ANTI-INFLATIONARY MEASURE. FACED WITH THE POTENTIAL INFLATIONARY IMPACT OF \$1.2 BILLION IN FOREIGN EXCHANGE RECEIPTS FROM COFFEE EXPORTS THIS YEAR, AND WITH THE NEW YORK PRICE OF COFFEE CONTINUING TO RISE, THE GOC AND THE COFFEE FEDERATION HAVE AGREED TO ISSUE A NEW SERIES OF COFFEE BONDS IN AN EFFORT TO SOAK UP EXCESS PURCHASING POWER. REPORTEDLY, THE BONDS WILL PAY 22 PERCENT INTEREST AND WILL OFFER OTHER INCENTIVES TO THE PURCHASERS INCLUDING A GOVERNMENT GUARANTEED

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MARKET FOR TRADING. THE PROCEEDS FROM THE SALES WILL BE USED

TO PROVIDE CROP LOANS TO THE COFFEE GROWERS, THUS ELIMINATING THE NEED TO OBTAIN DOLLAR FINANCING FROM ABOARD.

3. ANDEAN PACT DEBATE CONTINUES. ANDEAN PACT DECISION 100, AFFECTING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMON EXTERNAL TARIFF AND SECTORAL PROGRAMMING, HAS PROVOKED A LIVELY DEBATE IN COLOMBIA. THE GOVERNMENT SUPPORTS THE DECISION ON THE BASIS THAT IT PROVIDES GREATER FLEXIBILITY AND KEEPS THE PACT MOVING. THE PRIVATE SECTOR CLAIMS THAT IT REPRESENTS A STEP BACK FROM THE GOALS OF BOARDER MARKETS. INDUSTRIAL EFFICIENCY AND A COMMON EXTERNAL TARIFF THAT WOULD PROVIDE PROTECTION WHERE NEEDED BUT WOULD NOT PROMOTE UNECONOMICAL IMPORT SUBSTITUTION EFFORTS. THE NEW THREE-MAN JUNTA WAS IN BOGOTA THIS WEEK MEETING WITH PRESIDENT LOPEZ, OTHER GOC LEADERS, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR. THE ANDEAN PACT LABOR MINISTERS ALSO MET IN COLOMBIA THIS WEEK AND, AMONG OTHER THINGS, DISCUSSED THE NEED FOR A COMMON APPROACH TO THE TREATMENT AND CONTROL OF MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS.

4. CONTROVERSY OVER MILITARY UNIVERSITY. A PROJECT BY THE COLOMBIAN MILITARY TO EXPAND EXISTING UNIVERSITY LEVEL EDUCATION AT THE MILITARY ACADEMY AND EVENTUALLY TO OPEN A DEGREE-ISSUING MILITARY UNIVERSITY HAS CAUSED SOME CONTROVERSY IN PRESS AND ACADEMIC CIRCLES. THE CONTROVERSY SEEMS A RESULT OF MISLEADING PRESS REPORTS WHICH CREATED THE IMPRESSION THAT THE MILITARY INSTITUTIONS WOULD INTRUDE INTO THE CIVILIAN EDUCATION AREA AND THAT THE PROJECT WAS PROCEEDING OUTSIDE LEGALLY CONSTITUTED CHANNELS. MILITARY SOURCES HAVE TOLD THE EMBASSY THAT THEY WILL RESTRICT ADMISSION TO MILITARY APPLICANTS AND OBTAIN NECESSARY EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE APPROVAL. THESE SOURCES SAY THAT THE PROJECT IS A NECESSITY SINCE THE MILITARY SERIOUSLY LACKS PERSONNEL TRAINED IN ENGINEERING, LAW AND ECONOMICS, THE FACULTIES WHICH WILL COMPRISE THE MILITARY UNIVERSITY, AND THAT TRAINING MILITARY PERSONNEL IN EXISTING UNIVERSITIES EXPOSES THEM TO "CORRUPTING" LEFTIST INFLUENCE AT THESE UNIVERSITIES.

5. ELN GUERRILLAS RAID TOWN. A GROUP OF GUERRILLAS OF THE NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY (ELN) STRUCK THE TOWN OF SANTA ROSA IN BOLIVAR DEPARTMENT EARLY ON MAY 8. THE GROUP, ALLEGEDLY OPERATING UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF SUBVERSIVE LEADER FABIO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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VASQUEZ, HIS SHORTLY AFTER MIDNIGHT, ASSAULTING THE POLICE STATION WITH HIGH EXPLOSIVES. TWO POLICEMEN WERE KILLED IN THE ATTACK. THE ASSAILANTS TOOK APPROXIMATELY 65,000 PESOS (1800 DOLLARS) FROM A NEARBY BANK AND PICKED UP DRUGS AND OTHER SUPPLIES FROM THE TOWN'S STORES. OBSERVERS WERE IMPRESSED BY THE FACT THAT THE ELN FORCES, WHICH HAD BEEN DORMANT FOR SOME TIME, WERE WELL EQUIPPED WITH MODERN WEAPONS. THE RAID CAME TWO DAYS AFTER THE COLOMBIAN REVOLUTIONARY ARMED FORCES (FARC)

HAD AMBUSED AN ARMY PATROL IN ADJACENT SANTANDER DEPARTMENT,
WOUNDING THREE SOLDIERS WITH THE LOSS OF SEVERAL GUERRILLAS.
VAKY

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